

CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

WALTER M. DICKIE, M.D., Director

Weekly Bulletin



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GUY P. JONES
EDITOR

Profit and Loss Statement of Human Lives

More than three quarters of a million deaths in our white population alone are prevented in the course of one year under modern conditions by the improvement in mortality which has occurred since 1900.

Actually, the deaths of 1,207,359 white persons were recorded in this country in 1935; had our white population of that year experienced the death rates, by sex and age, observed in 1900, our vital statistics registers would have reported 1,975,761 white deaths. The difference between 1,975,761 expected deaths and 1,207,359 actual deaths, or 768,402, represents the number of lives that have been saved in 1935 by the general decrease in the mortality in that year from that of 1900. Expressed as a ratio, this saving in lives is 38.9 per cent of the number of expected deaths.

Many different causes contribute to the total death rate, and the improvement in mortality has been very unevenly divided among them; a few have actually shown retrogression. This is clearly shown in the statistics for the year 1935, the latest for which the requisite data are available.

Of 15 specific causes of death, the changes in mortality among 11 were such as to result in a saving in lives. Among those that have improved, tuberculosis ranks first, with a saving of more than 173,000 lives in 1935 alone. With an annual saving of this magnitude, it requires little imagination to picture the social and economic advantages gained. Second in rank to

tuberculosis will be found influenza and pneumonia, with a saving of practically 122,000 lives during 1935. Widespread application of the results of present researches on pneumonia should lead to even more substantial savings.

Diarrhea and enteritis, which ranks third in the list with an annual saving of about 108,000 lives, is of particular interest because practically all of these lives were saved in infancy and very early childhood. For each of these children there lies ahead a lifetime of social and economic activity. Much the same may be said with regard to the 59,000 lives saved by the improvement of the mortality from the principal communicable diseases of childhood. Of these, diphtheria alone accounts for 36,000 lives.

Typhoid and paratyphoid fevers are fifth on the list of causes of death with a favorable showing. In this case there is noted a saving of about 33,000 lives, or practically 93 per cent of the number that would have been lost had the sanitary conditions of 1900 remained unchanged. The "savings" recorded in the table for nephritis and cerebral hemorrhage and softening, which number about 26,000 and 17,000 respectively, are to a large extent artificial and arise from improvements in diagnostic practice and changes in statistical classification of deaths. The diseases of the puerperal state rank last in the list of causes of death with a saving in lives. The number saved was barely 4500; but in considering this figure one has to take into

account the great decline in the birth rate since the beginning of the century.

For only four causes of death have the changes in mortality resulted in a loss of lives beyond that expected on the basis of conditions in 1900. In order of rank these were organic heart disease, with an additional loss of about 59,000 lives; cancer, with 43,000 additional lives lost; diabetes, with 12,000; and external causes, excluding suicides, with 10,000. Although a part of the retrogression in the case of organic heart disease, cancer, and diabetes may be attributed to improved diagnostic technique, there undoubtedly were other fundamental factors present in the case of heart disease and diabetes, particularly at the older ages. Of course, in the figure for the total lives saved, the effect of errors of diagnosis cancels out, since they merely transfer deaths from one cause to another.

In our mode of living one great change has taken place since 1900: some twenty-nine million motor cars on our streets and highways have introduced an entirely new hazard; accidental deaths from this cause alone today run well in excess of 30,000 annually. If, then, we see an increase of 10,000 in the deaths from external causes, this implies that aside from deaths from automobile accidents there would actually have been a very distinct saving under this heading. Lastly, the changes in various causes of death which can not be shown in detail on the table contributed together a net saving of 350,000 lives.

We have done well. We have good reason to look back and congratulate ourselves on what has been achieved. But we might have done better. Our contemporaries in New Zealand are doing better. If we could have established in our population the very favorable mortality rates prevailing in New Zealand, there would have been only 914,000 deaths in 1935 in place of the 1,207,359 actually recorded. Thus, an additional 300,000 lives might have been saved if we had attained the mortality standard of New Zealand.—*Metropolitan Bulletin*.

VENEREAL DISEASE REPORTING

Two thousand one hundred fifteen cases of syphilis were reported in California during December of 1937, as compared with 1042 such cases in December of 1936. In December of 1937, 1812 cases of gonorrhea infections were reported as compared with 1152 such cases in the corresponding month of 1936. During the last half of 1937, 10,309 cases of syphilis were reported as compared with 5976 cases reported during the last half of 1936. During the last half of 1937, 10,082 cases of gonorrhea infections were reported as compared to 6564 such cases reported during the last half of 1936.

RESULTS IN NURSES EXAMINATION

A state board examination for certificate as registered nurse was held on November 3, 1937, in Sacramento, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. Of the 332 applicants who met the requirements for this examination, 307 appeared. Of the 25 who failed to appear, 19 or 76 per cent were repeaters. The number of repeaters in this examination was unusually large (28 per cent of the total taking) as was also the number of out-of-state graduates. Many of them had, no doubt, failed in other states as their grades were, on the whole, very low. The result was that the passing grade was low (154 points) in spite of the fact that most of those taking the examination for the first time, did well, with only fifteen per cent failures.

The examination questions appeared to be neither too easy nor too difficult for the group, as a whole, except in history of nursing in which there were eight perfect scores.

There were nineteen schools of nursing which had no failures in this examination, and fourteen which had failures, none of whom were taking the examination for the first time. The 31 candidates from California schools who failed the examination for the first time were distributed among twelve schools of nursing.

DISTRIBUTION OF GRADES

Letter grade	Score	Percentage receiving	Number receiving
Total	-----	100	307
A	201 points and above-----	5	16
B	186-200.5 points inc.-----	20	63
C	165.5-185.5 points inc.-----	40	118
D	154-165 points inc.-----	10	33
F	Below 154 points-----	25	77

GENERAL HEALTH CONDITIONS

Rabies in animals continues to be reported in epidemic proportions. During the month of December rabies appeared in Alameda, San Mateo, Tuolumne, Ventura and Yolo counties for the first time during recent months. Ventura County applied to the state for a rabies quarantine. An epidemic of smallpox occurred in Kings and Tulare counties—missed cases among the migratory workers were the sources of the outbreak. The numbers of cases of gonorrhea and syphilis continue at a high level due to the venereal disease control program carried on by the State Bureau of Venereal Diseases and cooperating local agencies.

Whenever the people are well informed, they can be trusted with their own government.—Thomas Jefferson.

FEWER MATERNAL DEATHS

Maternal deaths have decreased from 200 in the first six months of 1936 to 195 during a similar period of 1937, a decrease of 5, or 2.5 per cent. Maternal mortality rates are 4.4 and 5.0 per 1000 live births in 1937 and 1936 respectively. Maternal deaths, by race, for 1937 and 1936 respectively show: Whites 151 and 149, rates 4.2 and 4.1; Negro 7 and 7, rates 9.5 and 11.3; Indian 4 and 3, rates 18.9 and 12.6; Chinese 1 and 1, rates 4.0 and 3.5; Japanese 1 and 1, rates 1.4 and 1.4; Mexican 31 and 37, rates 5.6 and 6.1; Filipino, none and 2, rates 0 and 28.2; other races, none and none.

Maternal deaths by age of mother are given for 1937 and 1936. Analysis of births by age of mother is not made and it is not possible to compute the specific maternal death rate for each age group.

Age of decedent	1937	1936
15-24 -----	60	57
25-34 -----	92	106
35-44 -----	42	35
45-54 -----	1	2
All ages -----	195	200

TUBERCULOSIS FAVORABLE IN WHITE POPULATION

In the table below the total number of deaths from tuberculosis, all forms, the number contributed by each race, the percentage of total tuberculosis deaths contributed by each race in the first half of 1937, and the proportion each race bore to the total population of the state in 1930. This table shows that while whites are below the expectancy of death from tuberculosis, all other races seem to be more susceptible to the disease.

	Tuberculosis deaths		Percentage of total population in 1930
	Number	%	
All Races -----	2501	100.0	100.0
White -----	1652	66.1	88.8
Negro -----	106	4.2	1.4
Indian -----	43	1.7	0.3
Chinese -----	61	2.4	0.7
Japanese -----	59	2.4	1.7
Mexican -----	534	21.4	6.5
Filipino -----	41	1.6	0.54
Other races -----	5	0.2	0.05

NURSES RENEW REGISTRATION

During the year 1937, 21,128 nurses renewed their certificates as registered nurse. Certificates were issued to 2,933 nurses, 851 of whom were registered after examination and 2082 of which were registered without examination, through reciprocity.

FULL TIME COUNTY HEALTH UNITS IN CALIFORNIA

1932	1933	1934
Contra Costa Imperial Los Angeles Madera Monterey Orange Riverside San Bernardino San Diego San Joaquin San Luis Obispo Santa Barbara Stanislaus Yolo	Contra Costa Imperial Los Angeles Madera Monterey Orange Riverside San Bernardino San Diego San Joaquin San Luis Obispo Santa Barbara Stanislaus	Alameda Contra Costa Imperial Los Angeles Madera Monterey Orange Riverside San Bernardino San Diego San Joaquin San Luis Obispo Santa Barbara Stanislaus
1935	1936	1937
Alameda Contra Costa Fresno Imperial Los Angeles Madera Monterey Orange Riverside San Bernardino San Diego San Joaquin San Luis Obispo San Mateo Santa Barbara Stanislaus	Alameda Contra Costa Fresno Imperial Los Angeles Madera Monterey Orange Riverside San Bernardino San Diego San Joaquin San Luis Obispo San Mateo Santa Barbara Stanislaus	Alameda Contra Costa Fresno Imperial Kern Los Angeles Madera Monterey Orange Riverside San Bernardino San Diego San Joaquin San Luis Obispo San Mateo Santa Barbara Santa Cruz Stanislaus Ventura Yolo

HAZARDS AT HOME

A serious injury to you at home would cause wage and other losses to you and your family. Be careful of all home hazards, including the following:

1. Slippery floors and sidewalks.
2. Defective ladders and all makeshift supports.
3. Objects left lying on floors, walks, stairways, etc.
4. Broken or loose stair-treads; torn or loose stair carpet; stairs without handrails.
5. Electric lamps, extension cords, wall plugs, lamp sockets and switches in bad condition.
6. Never touch a light switch and some grounded object such as a kitchen sink or a bathroom fixture at the same time. You might receive a serious electric shock.
7. It is dangerous to approach a gas leak with an open flame. Call the gas company. If the leak seems serious, shut off the gas at the meter.
8. Never use gasoline or naphtha for cleaning purposes; use only non-flammable cleaning fluids.
9. It is dangerous to carry scalding water about the house in open pails.
10. Always open the garage doors wide before starting the automobile engine.

SAFETY INSTRUCTION CARD No. 129

—National Safety Council.

MORBIDITY**Complete Reports for Following Diseases for Week Ending
January 22, 1938****Chickenpox**

682 cases: Alameda County 4, Alameda 11, Berkeley 18, Oakland 32, San Leandro 5, Contra Costa County 3, Fresno County 18, Fresno 4, Glenn County 1, Eureka 40, Imperial County 4, Calexico 21, El Centro 2, Kern County 12, Lemoore 2, Lassen County 14, Los Angeles County 22, Alhambra 1, Azusa 4, Burbank 2, Claremont 1, Compton 5, Culver City 2, Glendale 15, Huntington Park 1, Long Beach 8, Los Angeles 66, Pasadena 4, Pomona 8, San Fernando 1, Santa Monica 3, Whittier 6, Torrance 2, Madera County 13, Madera 1, Chowchilla 4, Merced County 1, Mono County 1, Salinas 1, Orange County 9, Orange 3, Santa Ana 10, Riverside County 30, Corona 4, Riverside 1, Sacramento 4, Hollister 1, Redlands 3, San Bernardino 1, San Diego County 8, Chula Vista 1, Coronado 2, Escondido 5, San Diego 37, San Francisco 29, San Joaquin County 11, Lodi 6, Manteca 2, Stockton 4, Tracy 3, San Luis Obispo County 3, San Luis Obispo 4, San Mateo County 7, Menlo Park 10, Santa Barbara County 8, Lompoc 7, Santa Barbara 12, Santa Maria 12, San Jose 10, Santa Cruz 11, Watsonville 4, Loyalton 1, Fairfield 1, Suisun 1, Petaluma 1, Stanislaus County 2, Modesto 2, Turlock 4, Exeter 2, Ventura County 15, Oxnard 9, Santa Paula 13, Ventura 4, Woodland 2.

Diphtheria

28 cases: Humboldt County 1, Eureka 1, Kern County 2, Lake County 1, Los Angeles 6, Pomona 1, Orange County 1, Riverside County 1, Riverside 2, San Diego County 1, San Diego 2, Santa Barbara 1, Healdsburg 1, Sutter County 2, Yuba City 2, Ventura County 1, Ventura 1, Marysville 1.

German Measles

23 cases: Alameda 1, Berkeley 1, Oakland 1, Walnut Creek 2, Los Angeles County 3, Los Angeles 3, Pomona 1, Maywood 1, Yosemite National Park 1, Merced 1, Anaheim 1, Ontario 1, San Diego County 1, San Diego 2, San Francisco 2, Palo Alto 1.

Influenza

160 cases: Fresno County 13, Kern County 26, Bakersfield 1, Kings County 1, Los Angeles County 4, Glendora 1, Huntington Park 1, Los Angeles 25, Montebello 1, Pasadena 2, Maywood 1, Gardena 1, Madera County 31, Chowchilla 12, Napa County 1, Napa 2, Nevada City 28, Newport Beach 1, Laguna Beach 1, San Diego County 3, San Diego 1, Daly City 1, Fairfield 1, Marysville 1.

Malaria

2 cases: Calexico 1, San Joaquin County 1.

Measles

191 cases: Oakland 1, San Leandro 1, Fresno County 5, Fresno 3, Selma 2, Imperial County 1, Westmoreland 1, Kern County 13, Kings County 16, Los Angeles County 2, Glendale 1, Huntington Park 1, Long Beach 4, Los Angeles 7, Pasadena 1, Santa Monica 1, South Pasadena 1, Madera County 6, Chowchilla 1, Los Banos 1, Pacific Grove 1, Orange County 3, Riverside County 1, San Diego 2, San Francisco 1, San Joaquin County 1, San Luis Obispo 1, Santa Clara County 1, San Jose 1, Santa Cruz 4, Watsonville 1, Stanislaus County 3, Exeter 1, Visalia 92, Oxnard 3, Yolo County 1.

Mumps

385 cases: Berkeley 6, Oakland 11, San Leandro 1, Contra Costa County 2, Fresno County 24, Fresno 8, Reedley 1, Sanger 3, Kern County 3, Bakersfield 2, Los Angeles County 23, Compton 12, Covina 1, El Monte 1, El Segundo 3, Glendale 20, Long Beach 20, Los Angeles 10, Santa Monica 4, Hawthorne 2, Maywood 1, Madera County 72, Madera 16, Napa County 2, Orange County 3, Fullerton 1, Orange 1, Santa Ana 1, Riverside County 3, Riverside 1, Sacramento 5, San Diego County 11, Escondido 1, National City 1, San Diego 14, San Francisco 24, Stockton 1, San Luis Obispo County 9, San Luis Obispo 1, South San Francisco 6, Santa Barbara County 2, Santa Barbara 1, Santa Maria 2, San Jose 3, Santa Clara 2, Santa Cruz County 2, Santa Cruz 1, Watsonville 5, Redding 1, Stanislaus County 16, Oakdale 8, Turlock 1, Ventura County 3, Fillmore 1, Santa Paula 2, Yolo County 3, Yuba County 1.

Pneumonia (Lobar)

123 cases: Oakland 4, Antioch 1, Fresno County 5, Fresno 1, Eureka 1, Los Angeles County 17, Alhambra 1, Compton 1, Culver City 1, Glendale 1, Huntington Park 1, Los Angeles 57, Pasadena 1, Whittier 3, Madera County 1, Marin County 1, Monterey County 1, Santa Ana 1, Corona 1, Sacramento 1, San Diego 1, San Francisco 14, Santa Barbara 1, Santa Clara 2, Siskiyou County 2, Sutter County 1, Yuba City 1.

Scarlet Fever

264 cases: Alameda 4, Oakland 12, Colusa 1, Concord 1, Fresno County 13, Fresno 1, Glenn County 1, Eureka 2, Imperial County 1, Calexico 2, Kern County 4, Bakersfield 2, Delano 1, Kings County 2, Los Angeles County 19, Alhambra 1, Avalon 6, Claremont 1, Compton 2, Culver City 2, Glendale 2, Glendora 1, Huntington Park 2, Inglewood 1, Long Beach 5, Los Angeles 52, Pasadena 6, Redondo 1, San Gabriel 2, Santa Monica 1, Whittier 1, Lynwood 1, South Gate 2, Bell 1, Gardena 3, Madera

County 1, Los Banos 1, Monterey County 2, Salinas 1, Orange County 5, Anaheim 1, Newport Beach 1, Orange 2, Santa Ana 4, Laguna Beach 2, Riverside County 1, Riverside 1, Sacramento County 9, Sacramento 2, San Bernardino 2, San Diego County 1, National City 3, San Diego 2, San Francisco 11, San Joaquin County 11, Lodi 10, Tracy 1, San Mateo County 2, Daly City 1, Redwood City 7, San Mateo 1, Santa Barbara 1, Santa Clara County 1, Gilroy 1, Mountain View 1, Petaluma 1, Sutter County 1, Tehama County 2, Exeter 2, Tuolumne County 1, Sonora 1, Ventura County 3, Oxnard 2, Ventura 1, Ojai 1, Yolo County 1.

Smallpox

35 cases: Contra Costa County 1, Fresno County 2, Imperial County 1, Westmoreland 5, Kings County 12, Los Angeles County 6, Pasadena 2, Santa Monica 4, Maywood 1, Visalia 1.

Typhoid Fever

6 cases: Berkeley 1, Colusa County 1, Fresno County 1, Imperial County 1, Riverside 1, California 1.*

Whooping Cough

446 cases: Berkeley 8, Oakland 15, San Leandro 1, Contra Costa County 4, Fresno County 1, Eureka 4, Kern County 13, Bakersfield 1, Corcoran 1, Lake County 4, Los Angeles County 19, Alhambra 1, Glendale 2, La Verne 2, Long Beach 4, Los Angeles 31, Monrovia 1, Pasadena 1, San Fernando 2, Santa Monica 1, Madera County 18, Madera 3, Chowchilla 4, Merced 4, Monterey County 1, Carmel 2, Monterey 1, Pacific Grove 2, Salinas 4, Anaheim 1, Seal Beach 2, Riverside County 5, Sacramento County 5, Sacramento 32, North Sacramento 3, Ontario 2, San Bernardino 2, San Diego County 10, Escondido 6, La Mesa 6, National City 14, San Diego 24, San Francisco 66, San Joaquin County 24, Lodi 4, Manteca 9, Stockton 16, San Luis Obispo County 2, Paso Robles 1, San Mateo County 2, Daly City 6, San Mateo 2, Lompoc 1, Santa Maria 2, Santa Clara County 1, Gilroy 2, Palo Alto 2, San Jose 3, Santa Cruz County 3, Santa Cruz 1, Benicia 3, Fairfield 4, Suisun 17, Vallejo 1, Stanislaus County 1, Exeter 1, Sonora 1, Ventura County 1, Ventura 2, Yuba County 1.

Meningitis (Epidemic)

One case: San Marino.

Dysentery (Bacillary)

7 cases: Berkeley 1, Kern County 1, Hermosa 1, Los Angeles 1, Lindsay 2, Tulare 1.

Ophthalmia Neonatorum

One case: Orange County.

Pellagra

2 cases: San Francisco 1, San Jose 1.

Poliomyelitis

One case: Riverside County.

Tetanus

One case: Kern County.

Trachoma

One case: Oakland

Encephalitis (Epidemic)

One case: Fresno County.

Trichinosis

3 cases: Berkeley 2, Sacramento 1.

Jaundice (Epidemic)

One case: Madera.

Food Poisoning

13 cases: San Francisco.

Undulant Fever

6 cases: Monrovia 1, Bell 1, San Francisco 1, Dunsmuir 1, Tulare County 1, Visalia 1.

Coccidioides Granuloma

One case: Monterey County.

Septic Sore Throat

One case: San Francisco.

Rabies (Animal)

41 cases: Kern County 1, Los Angeles County 14, Alhambra 1, Huntington Park 1, Los Angeles 14, Monrovia 1, Pasadena 2, South Gate 1, Daly City 1, Santa Clara County 1, Mountain View 1, Santa Clara 1, Oxnard 1, Yolo County 1.

*Cases charged to "California" represent patients ill before entering the state or those who contracted their illness traveling about the state throughout the incubation period of the disease. These cases are not chargeable to any one locality.

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